



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2008
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FIFTEEN INDICTED IN MARIJUANA TRAFFICKING CONSPIRACY

Operation "Rolling Thunder"

COLUMBUS – A federal grand jury here has returned a 31-count superseding indictment charging 15 people with operating a marijuana trafficking enterprise that grossed more than \$10 million between March 2007 and March 2008.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Anthony C. Marotta, Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration; Jose Gonzalez, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, and Columbus Police Chief James G. Jackson announced the superseding indictment returned under seal on October 28 and unsealed today following the arrests of the defendants.

The indictment alleges that the 15 defendants, led by Donald Gene Dailey, Jr., conspired to distribute more than 1,000 kilograms of marijuana throughout central Ohio between January 1, 2000 and October 1, 2008.

The indictment alleges that Donald Gene Dailey, Jr. operated a continuing criminal enterprise from 2000 until 2008 for the purpose of manufacturing, importing and distributing marijuana. If convicted, Dailey's sentence will be life imprisonment.

The indictment alleges that conspirators attempted to conceal the operation by employing various techniques including use of fraudulent identification, surveillance of law enforcement officers, and making co-conspirators take polygraph exams to try and detect whether or not they were working with law enforcement.

The indictment alleges that conspirators used the money from the operation to buy property and cars including vehicles to transport the marijuana from Arizona to Ohio. The indictment seeks forfeiture of six houses and two parcels of land allegedly purchased with money from the marijuana operation, along with forfeiture of \$4,284,007 in cash seized while executing search warrants during the course of the investigation, 74 firearms seized at Donald Gene Dailey's residence, nine firearms seized at Timothy Ray Dailey's residence and 13 vehicles.

The indictment also alleges that defendants illegally possessed firearms and laundered the proceeds from the operation in order to hide the funds generated by the operation.

A federal grand jury indicted the Dailey brothers and Melvin Blevins in April 2008, charging them with conspiracy, trafficking marijuana and ecstasy, and gun crimes. Blevins was also charged with distribution of drugs to a minor after a videotape showing him offering marijuana to a young child was discovered.

All the charges contained in the April indictment are repeated in the superseding indictment announced today. The indictment charges all 15 with conspiracy. If convicted, they each face at least ten years imprisonment.

Donald Gene Dailey, Timothy Ray Dailey and Melvin Blevins have been in custody since their arrests in April. Teams of DEA, IRS agents and Columbus Police officers arrested seven other defendants this morning. Three others will be summoned to appear for initial appearances before a federal magistrate. One is in state custody on a separate charge. One has contacted agents agreeing to turn himself in.

Teams of agents and officers also executed six search warrants today.

A copy of the indictment, along with a list of defendants and the potential penalties, is attached.

Lockhart commended the cooperative investigation by agents and officers of the DEA, IRS and Columbus Police, along with Assistant U.S. Attorney David Devillers, who is prosecuting the case.

An indictment is merely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent of the charges and it is the government's burden to prove a defendant's guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

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